

## **Arkansas Department of Education**

Dr. Tom Kimbrell, commissioner

### **News Release**

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### **THREE SCHOOLS RECEIVE GRANTS TO FORM SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS**

LITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Department of Education today announces the awarding of state grants to help three elementary schools build upon their dedication toward improving the health of their students.

Cross County Elementary in the Cross County district, Magazine Elementary in the Magazine district, and Acorn Elementary in the Ouachita River district are the latest recipients of state funds to institute school-based health centers on their campuses.

"These are innovative districts, which are willing to go above and beyond and know that the key to ensuring student success is achieved by focusing on the whole child," said Jerri Clark, grants manager for the ADE's Office of Coordinated School Health. "These centers offer a greater extent of services than the school nurse and counselor typically offer. They focus mainly on preventative care, screenings, education outreach, and checkups. "

Each school will receive \$150,000 for use during the 2011-2012 school year. The grant will last five years but annual funding will decline to 50 percent of the original award by the fifth year with the expectation that district and community resources will sustain the centers after that.

The money comes from the 2009 tobacco excise tax increase for health programs approved by the Legislature at the request of Gov. Mike Beebe. Nine schools received the grants for the 2010-2011 school year.

At least one full-time registered nurse is required to direct each center. It's expected that each center will build relationships with local doctors, dentists and optometrists to provide services to students. The centers will also work with social workers, drug counselors and other health professionals.

The ADE coordinates on the project with the Arkansas Department of Health, Arkansas Children's Hospital, and Arkansas Center for Health Improvement.